

**THE USE OF GROUP WORK TO ENHANCE STUDENTS'
PARTICIPATION IN LITERATURE ACTIVITIES IN AN ESL
CLASSROOM**

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IN LITERATURE ACTIVITIES IN AN ESL CLASSROOM**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work in this research paper is my own except for the quotations and summaries which I have duly acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research study was to find out how group work enhances students' participation in literature activities in an ESL classroom as well as the students' views on the use of group work in literature activities in an ESL classroom. This study was carried out in a secondary school in Machang, Kelantan using an action research approach. 21 students took part in this study. As for the data collection instruments, classroom observation recording, classroom observation checklist and questionnaire were used. The results of the classroom observation recording and classroom observation checklist indicated that the students managed to participate well in performing the literature activities in the classroom. Additionally, according to the findings of the questionnaire made with Google Form, it revealed that the use of group work in literature activities received positive views from the students due to the high level of mean. Therefore, group work is considered to be successful in enhancing students' participation in performing literature activities. Further research into the use of group work to be utilized in Malaysian classrooms to enhance students' participation in literature activities may be aided by this study's useful information for ESL teachers and Ministry of Education officials.

Keywords: *Group work, students' participation, literature activities*



ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian penyelidikan ini adalah untuk mengetahui bagaimana kerja kumpulan meningkatkan penyertaan pelajar dalam aktiviti sastera dalam bilik darjah ESL serta pandangan pelajar tentang penggunaan kerja kumpulan dalam aktiviti sastera dalam bilik darjah ESL. Kajian ini dijalankan di sebuah sekolah menengah di Machang, Kelantan dengan menggunakan pendekatan kajian tindakan. Seramai 21 orang pelajar telah mengambil bahagian dalam kajian ini. Bagi instrumen pengumpulan data pula, rekod pemerhatian bilik darjah, senarai semak pemerhatian bilik darjah dan soal selidik digunakan. Hasil daripada rekod pemerhatian bilik darjah dan senarai semak pemerhatian bilik darjah menunjukkan pelajar berjaya mengambil bahagian dengan baik dalam melaksanakan aktiviti literatur di dalam bilik darjah. Selain itu, menurut dapatan soal selidik yang dibuat dengan borang Google, ia mendedahkan bahawa penggunaan kerja kumpulan dalam aktiviti kesusasteraan mendapat pandangan positif daripada pelajar kerana tahap min yang tinggi. Oleh itu, kerja kumpulan dianggap berjaya dalam meningkatkan penyertaan pelajar dalam melaksanakan aktiviti sastera. Kajian lanjut mengenai penggunaan kerja berkumpulan untuk digunakan di bilik darjah Malaysia untuk meningkatkan penyertaan pelajar dalam aktiviti kesusasteraan mungkin dibantu oleh maklumat berguna kajian ini untuk guru ESL dan pegawai Kementerian Pendidikan.



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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.0 Background of the Study

The issue of having students that are reluctant to participate in carrying out literature activities in an ESL classroom needs to be solved immediately in order to improve students' understanding of the literature learned. As for my teaching, the researcher taught 2 Mumtaz which is a Form 2 class in Sekolah Menengah Ugama Arabiah Al-Hasaniah, Kelantan. The class consists of 21 students with intermediate and low levels of English proficiency. The teaching was focused on literature skills and the duration for the teaching was 1 hour and 10 minutes. From the teaching, the researcher noticed the students were reluctant to participate in performing the literature activities. For instance, when they were asked to read the poem in front of the class, there were no volunteers. Thus, due to having no volunteers, the researcher decided to choose the students randomly to read it aloud to the class. As the literature activities involved students reading the literary work and putting their own thoughts about what they read, they somehow refused to participate in those activities. When it comes to literature, they were seen to be passive in the classroom as well as feeling reluctant to do and participate in the tasks. It is perceived that the students were reluctant to participate in literature activities in the classroom due to some reasons in which they might contribute to the students' poor understanding of the literature and inability to improve their literature skills. Therefore, in order to eliminate the mentioned issue, the right action which is group work was implemented in the classroom.



2.0 Problem statement

Students' reluctance to participate in literature activities in an ESL classroom.

From the teaching video, there were times that the students refused to participate in performing the literature activities in the classroom. One of the cases detected was when the teacher asked for volunteers to read the poem aloud in the class. There were no volunteers to do this activity. Moreover, students were bored and looked passive when the teacher explained the poem in the class. This is mainly because the students believed literature is a difficult and tedious topic to comprehend due to its structural difficulty, use of language as well as the involvement of critical thinking. They somehow struggle to comprehend the structure in literature like plots, characters, themes and others which are significant to link the literature learned. As for the use of language, it is perceived that due to the students' low English proficiency level, it contributes to the reason why they find learning literature is challenging. As for critical thinking which is an important aspect to completely comprehend the literature learned, is viewed as insignificant for some students. Thus, group work is implemented in the classroom in order to prevent bigger concerns from occurring.

Some students may view the effects of group work differently in which some may find it engaging and dynamic, others may somehow find it disruptive and prone to "parasitism" when carrying out group work. Therefore, this study aims to find out how group work enhances students' participation in literature activities and identify the students' views on the use of group work in literature activities in an ESL classroom.

3.0 Research Objectives

1. To find out how group work enhances students' participation in literature activities in an ESL classroom.
2. To identify the students' views on the use of group work in literature activities in an ESL classroom.

4.0 Research Questions

1. How does group work enhance students' participation in literature activities in an ESL classroom?
2. What are the students' views on the use of group work in literature activities in an ESL classroom?

5.0 Significance of the Study

Multiple benefits are provided from this study in which one of them is to aid teachers in ensuring the implementation of group work in the classroom is beneficial. When the right strategy, which in this context is group work, is utilized in the classroom, students may make perceptive remarks and good connections as a consequence, and the learning environment in the classroom may be enhanced by a high degree of vigour and passion. The next benefit from this study is to increase students' participation in the classroom. Students' participation in the classroom plays a huge role in their academic achievement. Therefore, teacher needs to play the role to encourage students' participation by implementing group work in literature activities. Thus, this study helps English language teachers in creating engaging, efficient and appropriate strategy which is group work for the students to enhance their participation in literature activities in an ESL classroom.

6.0 Limitation of the study

A limitation is identified in this study which is the small sampling size. As this study's focus is solely on students from a secondary school based in Machang, Kelantan, it does not represent the whole population. This limitation underlines the difficulty to find out how group work enhances students' participation in literature activities and overall students' views on the use of group work in literature activities in an ESL classroom.

7.0 Definition of terms

7.1 Group work

According to Brown (2001), group work is used to refer to a variety of teaching methods in which two or more students are given a task or assignment that requires cooperation and self-initiated discourse. On the other hand, Chiriac and Frykedal (2022) explained that group work is defined as a way to organize classroom activity in which the teacher assigns students to do a task in groups, and the students' equality and mutuality rely on how they approach the group task, whether they work cooperatively or collaboratively. For the context of this research, group work is when the students were instructed to be in groups and all members worked together to perform the activity in the classroom.

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7.2 Participation

According to Mohd. Yusof Abdullah, Noor Rahamah Abu Bakar and Maizatul Haizan Mahbob (2011), participation is referred to as being involved in the classroom activities. Meanwhile Lee (2005) asserts that speaking up in class to answer questions, offer remarks, and participate in discussions constitutes involvement. It's common for teachers to label inactive students as such in the classroom when they don't contribute to the methods outlined. Hence this research defines students' participation as the students' involvement in performing the literature activities in the classroom which include asking and answering the group members' questions, sharing opinions with the group members as well as giving comments to the group members' ideas.

7.3 Literature

Literature is a creative medium used to convey content and the elegance of language. It has a strong connection to linguistics and language. Additionally, it uses a wise selection of poetic tropes to give abstract imagination a context (Ashairi Suliman, Melor Md Yusof and Mohamed Yusoff Mohd Nor, 2019). Literature shows readers how sentence patterns may be purposefully changed to produce exceptional effects. By using words to build or link to the world, an author encourages readers to participate. Readers identify with and gravitate toward the author's universe through feelings and emotions. Like the author, readers must use imagination to enter and eventually stay in the world of the book. The reader must be emotionally invested in order to grasp literary materials on a deeper level (Adhikari B. R., 2019).

The purpose of this study is to find out how group work enhances students' participation in literature activities in an ESL classroom and identify the students' views on the use of group work in literature activities in an ESL classroom. For students to participate well in performing literature activities, teachers must investigate the use of the group work.